

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

DOS Review Completed.

CTS-HK-ADG-23 1975 10 11 10 37
KENNEDY HOWE LORD A-172

T O P S E C R E T SENSITIVE 100800Z NOV 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)
CALL COLONEL KENNEDY IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT
AND FLASH TO KISSINGER AT KEY BISCAYNE. INFORM KENNEDY
TO CALL KEY BISCAYNE AND HAVE THIS FLASH MESSAGE DELIVERED
DIRECTLY TO KISSINGER UPON RECEIPT REGARDLESS OF THE HOUR.
FROM: HEIG SAIGON, 0256 FLASH
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER
BUNKER AND I SPENT TWO HOURS WITH THIEU AND NHA STARTING AT
11:00 AM SAIGON TIME NOVEMBER 10. THIEU READ THE PRESIDENT'S
LETTER VERY CAREFULLY MAKING MARGINALIA AT KEY PLACES. I THEN EXPLAINED

TO HIM IN DETAIL THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE CHANGES WE INTENDED TO
SEEK, COVERED THE GAME PLAN AND THEN EXPANDED AT SOME LENGTH ON THE
REASONS WHY IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THIEU COOPERATE WITH US IN THE FINAL
STAGES. I HIT VERY STRONGLY THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS FAILURE TO DO SO
AND, IN EFFECT, PRESENTED HIM WITH AN ULTIMATUM.

AFTER COMPLETION OF THIS LENGTHY PRESENTATION, DURING WHICH THIEU
CONTINUALLY CONDUCTED A CONVERSATION WITH NHA IN VIETNAMESE, THIEU
STATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE MORE DETAILS ON THE SPECIFIC CHANGES
WE WERE GOING TO SEEK, NOTING THAT PRINCIPLES WERE NOT SUFFICIENT FOR
HIM TO MAKE THE KIND OF DECISION WE WERE ASKING FOR. HE STATED
THAT WHEN YOU BRIEFED DURING YOUR LAST VISIT TO SAIGON THINGS LOOKED
RATHER GOOD BUT WHEN THEY READ THE ENGLISH TEXT OF THE DRAFT AGREEMENT,
THERE APPEARED TO BE DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN WHAT YOU SAID AND WHAT THEY
READ. THEN WHEN THEY READ THE VIETNAMESE VERSION THESE DISCREPANCIES
GREW AND BECAME MORE SERIOUS. HE STATED THAT THIS CAUSED GREAT DIFFI-
CULTY NOT ONLY IN SAIGON BUT IN ALL OF THE CAPITALS THAT YOU VISITED
WHERE ORAL BRIEFINGS WERE GIVEN. INITIALLY, MOST WERE ENTHUSIASTIC
BUT WHEN THEY READ THE COLD PRINT THEY LOST ALL CONFIDENCE. THIEU
STATED HE DID NOT WANT THIS KIND OF DIFFICULTY ON THIS OCCASION.

I TOLD THIEU IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS THAT WE WOULD, OF COURSE, WORK
WITH HIM AS WE DEVELOPED SPECIFIC LANGUAGE BUT THAT HE MUST UNDERSTAND
THAT I WAS NOT HERE TO NEGOTIATE WITH HIM BUT RATHER TO DISCUSS WITH HIM

THE CONTENTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER WHICH CLEARLY ENUNCIATED THE
GENERAL DIRECTIONS THAT THE PRESIDENT INTENDED TO PURSUE ON THE IMPOR-
TANT OUTSTANDING ISSUES THAT REMAINED. I STATED THAT WE HAD MADE THE
DECISION TO PROCEED AND NOW IT WAS ESSENTIAL FOR US TO KNOW IN
PRINCIPLE WHETHER OR NOT HE WOULD COOPERATE WITH US. I POINTED OUT
THAT WE WERE BEING SUBJECTED TO COUNTLESS CONFLICTING HIGH LEVEL VIEW-
POINTS WHICH PURPORTEDLY REPRESENTED THIEU'S THINKING AND WHICH WERE
BEING PROVIDED TO THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PRESS WITH INCREASING REGULARITY.

I STATED THAT NOW IS THE TIME FOR US TO BE INFORMED WITH RESPECT TO
THIEU'S INTENTIONS THAT WE ARE PREPARED FOR EITHER EVENTUALITY AND
THAT THE PRESIDENT'S DETERMINATION TO PROCEED WITH A SETTLEMENT NOW
WAS UNSHAKABLE AND INEVITABLE.

THIEU SEEMED TO BACK OFF, SENSING THAT WE WERE HEADING TOWARD
SOME FIRSTCLASS BRINKMANSHIP. HE STATED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT
WE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO GIVE HIM CHAPTER AND VERSE BUT THAT IT WOULD
BE MOST HELPFUL IF WE COULD ANSWER SOME GENERAL QUESTIONS WHICH HE
AND HIS ADVISERS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT, SUCH AS THE SIZE OF THE ICCS,
WHEN IT WOULD BE IN PLACE, WHEN THE CEASEFIRE WOULD TAKE PLACE WITH
RESPECT TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT, HOW THE POLITICAL PROCESS WOULD OCCUR,
WHEN WE VISUALIZED UNIFICATION OF NORTH AND SOUTH WOULD TAKE PLACE,
ETC. HE STATED THAT HE HAD A MEETING SCHEDULED WITH HIS NSC THIS AFTER-

NOON IN WHICH THEY WOULD DISCUSS THE SITUATION. HE WOULD THEN LIKE TO HAVE ME MEET SOMETIME TONIGHT, AFTER 9:00 PM SAIGON TIME, WITH TWO OR THREE OF HIS KEY ADVISORS TO SEE HOW MANY OF THE OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS WE COULD CLARIFY TO ASSIST HIM IN CONSIDERING THE BROAD QUESTION AT ANOTHER MEETING WITH HIS NSC THAT WOULD TAKE PLACE TOMORROW MORNING SAIGON TIME. FOLLOWING THIS MEETING, THIEU SAID HE WOULD MEET WITH ME AT 3:00 PM SAIGON TIME AND PROVIDE ME WITH AN ANSWER TO THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER.

MY JUDGMENT NOW IS THAT THIEU CANNOT BRING HIMSELF TO AN OPEN BREAK WITH US. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE WILL EXERCISE EVERY PLOY IN HIS DICTIONARY TO ACHIEVE FURTHER DELAY, HOPEFULLY WITHOUT A COMMITMENT. ALL OF THIS TENDS TO SUGGEST THAT HE INTENDS TO GO ALONG IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS BUT WE HAVE BEEN FOOLED BEFORE AND MAY BE FACED WITH A FIRM NO TOMORROW AFTERNOON.

IN THE INTERIM, GIVEN THE SUSPICIOUS NATURE OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE, I THINK IT WOULD SERVE OUR PURPOSE TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE AS WE CAN ON THE QUESTIONS THAT THEY HAVE. WITH RESPECT TO THE SPECIFIC POSITIONS THAT YOU WOULD TAKE IN THE PARIS MEETINGS, WE HAVE TWO OPTIONS. THE FIRST (OPTION A) IS TO MERELY GIVE NHA A WRITTEN VERSION OF THE TALKING POINTS WHICH I USED THIS MORNING ON THE MAJOR CHANGES. THESE, AS YOU KNOW, ARE GENERAL IN CHARACTER BUT WOULD BE LESS LIKELY TO REASSURE THIEU. THE SECOND OPTION (OPTION B

) WOULD INVOLVE OUR ACTUALLY GIVING THE SPECIFIC CHANGES YOU INTEND TO PRESS FOR ON THE MAJOR ITEMS CONTAINED IN THE TALKING POINTS. IN EACH CASE, WE WOULD GIVE THE MINIMUM OR FALLBACK POSITION AS AGREED UPON WEDNESDAY IN WASHINGTON. THE DISADVANTAGE OF THIS IS THAT THIEU WOULD THEN HAVE A SCORECARD TO ASSESS YOUR EFFECTIVENESS IN PARIS AND BEFORE THAT TIME HE MAY DEMAND OTHER CHANGES WHICH WILL BE EVEN TOUGHER TO MANAGE. THE ADVANTAGE IS THAT WE WOULD BE DEALING IN A MOST FORTHRIGHT WAY WITH THIEU AND I THINK TAKE A LARGE STEP TOWARD ELIMINATING CURRENT SUSPICIONS WHICH ARE VIRULENT.

THE DECISION ON WHICH OPTION TO PURSUE DEPENDS ON YOUR AND THE PRESIDENT'S WILLINGNESS TO LAY IT ON THE LINE DURING MY TRIP. IN THIS MORNING'S MEETING, I BROUGHT IT TO THE POINT OF CONFRONTATION. THERE IS NO DOUBT IN THIEU'S MIND THAT A NEGATIVE RESPONSE FROM HIM MAY WELL RESULT IN BILATERAL ACTION BY US. HE OBVIOUSLY AVOIDED, AND I BELIEVE INTENDS TO CONTINUE TO AVOID, THIS KIND OF A RUPTURE. IF YOU WISH ME TO PUSH IT TO THE HILT, I WOULD STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT WE TAKE THE SECOND OPTION. IF ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU WANT TO HOLD OFF RISKING A FINAL BREAK DURING MY VISIT THEN THE MORE GENERAL APPROACH IN OPTION A WOULD MAKE MORE SENSE. IF I DO NOT HEAR FROM YOU BEFORE OUR MEETING TONIGHT, I WILL USE OPTION A SINCE THIS IS ESSENTIALLY A REPEAT OF MY ORAL PRESENTATION THIS MORNING.

I ALSO NEED YOUR GUIDANCE ON HOW FAR I CAN GO ON TECHNICAL QUESTIONS RELATED TO HOW WE VISUALIZE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT ITSELF. BUNKER, NEGROPONTE AND MYSELF WILL CAVEAT EACH ANSWER IN ANY EVENT TO BE SURE WE ARE PROTECTED. WE WILL NOT MAKE POLICY BUT WHEN WE HAVE DISCUSSED AN ISSUE SUCH AS THE APPROXIMATE SIZE OF THE ICCS I THINK IT SERVES OUR PURPOSE TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE. ALONG THIS LINE, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE OF VALUE TO GIVE THIEU A COPY OF THE DRAFT PROTOCOL ON THE ICCS PREPARED BY SULLIVAN. SINCE HE HAS ALREADY OFFICIALLY CIRCULATED THIS, WE SHOULD PROBABLY STICK WITH HIS VERSION. WE CAN POLICE UP POSSIBLE CHANGES AT A LATER DATE AND THE SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OUR STAFF DRAFT AND SULLIVAN'S WHICH YOU HOLD THERE IN KEY BISCAYNE ARE NOT THAT DIFFICULT TO MANAGE. I AM SORRY TO DISTURB YOU AT THIS HOUR BUT I AM SURE YOU RECOGNIZE HOW IMPORTANT IT IS THAT I HAVE YOUR GUIDANCE BEFORE ENTERING TONIGHT'S MEETING. IF IT IS NOT AVAILABL, I INTEND TO PROCEED AS OUTLINED HEREIN SO THAT THIEU WILL HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO EXCUSES FOR FAILING TO BITE THE BULLET TOMORROW AFTERNOON.

THE MEETING WAS TENSE BUT NEVER EMOTIONAL AND DESPITE THE FRANKNESS OF THE DISCUSSION IT NEVER LOST CORDIALITY. THIEU SEEMED MUCH MORE CONTROLLED AND CONFIDENT THAN DURING THE OCTOBER DISCUSSIONS.

WARM REGARDS.

OPR NOTE: THIS MESSAGE IS "HAIGTO 3"

TOP SECRET SENSITIVE

EXCLUSIVE

EYES ONLY

DEHARDVCIRYACRKSRSQC